

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

1. At page 3, line 4, please add the following new paragraph:

Figure 1 is an illustration of an electroluminescent lamp.

2. Please replace the paragraphs starting on Page 3, line 5 to Page 3, line 12 with the following paragraphs:

Figure 2 is a flow chart illustrating a sequence of steps for fabricating the electroluminescent lamp shown in Figure 3;

Figure 3 is an exploded pictorial illustration of an electroluminescent lamp fabricated in accordance with the steps shown in Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a top view of the connector and an interconnect tab portion of the present invention, and

Figure 5 is a cross-sectional view of the connector taken along line 4-4 of Figure 4.

3. Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 3, line 15 with the following paragraph:

Figure 1 is a schematic illustration of one embodiment of an electroluminescent (EL) lighting system 100 of the present invention. The EL lighting system 100 comprises an EL lamp 120 and a connector 200 to provide electrical energy for the light system. The EL lamp 120 includes a substrate 122, a rear electrode 128, a dielectric layer 130, a phosphor layer 132, a conductive layer 134, and a front outlining electrode 136. The EL lamp further includes a tab interconnect tab portion 173, which receives the leads from the rear electrode 128 and front outlining electrode 136, and is configured to be releasably and fixedly mated with the connector 200.

4. Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 5, line 11 with the following:

Figure 2 illustrates a sequence of steps 140 for fabricating EL lamp 120. EL lamp 120 may, for example, have a metal substrate, e.g., 0.25 mm gauge aluminum, a plastic substrate, e.g., 0.15 mm heat stabilized polycarbonate, or a paper based substrate, e.g., 80 pt. card stock. With respect to an EL lamp utilizing a plastic substrate, a rear electrode is formed 142 on a front surface of EL lamp 120. Next, a dielectric layer is formed 144 over

the rear electrode and extends beyond an illumination area for the design. Subsequently, a phosphor layer is formed 146 over the dielectric layer and preferably is formed to define the illumination area. A sealant layer is then formed 147 over the remaining exposed portion of the dielectric layer. A layer of indium tin oxide ink is formed 148 over the phosphor layer, a front outlining electrode is then formed 150 on the sealant layer and a front outlining insulating layer is formed 152 on the front outlining electrode layer. A protective coat is then applied 154 over the layers of the EL lamp 120.

5. Please replace the paragraph beginning on Page 5, line 23 with the following paragraph:

More particularly, and referring now to Figure 3, an EL sign 160 includes a plastic substrate. The substrate has a front surface 162 and a rear surface (not shown) and is first positioned in an automated flat bed screen printing press (not shown). A rear electrode 164, such as screen printable carbon or silver, having an illumination area 166 and a rear electrode lead 168 is screen printed onto front surface 162 of sign 160. Illumination portion 166 defines a shape, e.g., an "L", representative of the ultimate image to be illuminated by sign 160, although not extending to the extent of an illumination area hereinafter defined.

6. Please replace the paragraphs beginning on page 10, line 26 to Page 11, line 8 with the following:

In a preferred embodiment shown in Figures 4 and 5, tab interconnect portion 173 includes two slots 202 die cut into the substrate to define a male end 175. The male end 175 is mateably received by slide connector 200 such that the connector is mounted to tab interconnect portion 173. Tab interconnect portion 173 further includes a key slot 177, which is die cut into the substrate and a pair of locking holes 213 on either side of the front electrode lead and the rear electrode lead.

As shown in Figures 4 and 5, slide connector 200 is configured to entirely surround exposed leads 168 and 188, i.e., the portion of leads 168 and 188 that have been left uncovered. Connector 200 has an opening 205 to receive the male end 175 of interconnect portion 173.

7. Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 15 with the following:

Slide connector 200 further includes a pin 203 that ensures that slide connector 200 is properly oriented on tab interconnect portion 173. Preferably, pin 203 is positioned in the connector opening 205 between the rear electrode lead contact and the front electrode lead contact and is offset therein, as shown in Figures 4 and 5. This insures that the slide connector 200 is incapable of being incorrectly attached.